3. Gemmological Institute of India, Mumbai (Maharashtra).

4. Gem Testing Laboratory, Mumbai, Maharashtra.

5. Pangam Enterprises, Pune, Maharashtra.

6. Gem Testing Laboratory, CPL, GSI, Calcutta (West Bengal).

7. Gem Testing Laboratory, Madras (Tamil Nadu).

8. Sri Ramkrishna Gem Testing Laboratory, Salem (Tamil Nadu).

9. Gem Testing Laboratory, Trivandrum (Kerala).

10. Gem Testing Laboratory, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh).

11. Indian Diamond Institute, Surat.

12. Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai (Maharashtra).

13. S.G. Jhaveri Centre for Diamond Technology, Mumbai (Maharashtra).

14. St. Xaviers College, Mumbai (Maharashtra).

(b) to (d). There is no proposal with the Government to set up more Testing Centres for Gems. Indian Gemmological Institute caters to the requirements of Gem Trade in Delhi.

[English]

Setting up of Brand Acquisition Fund

4560. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a Brand Acquisition Fund;

(b) if so, the main features of the proposed fund; and

(c) the extent to which it is likely to help in promoting Indian brands in the International markets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c). No such fund has been set up by the Ministry of Commerce as on date. However, it is proposed that once the India Brand Equity Fund (IBEF) is fully operational, a proposal for setting up a Brand Acquisition Fund will be put up to its Board of Trustees for examination.

Export of Imported Goods

4561. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the new customs provisions which allow import of goods without licence if the goods are to be re-exported with a value addition of 10% or more;

(b) whether the new provisions are being misused by many importers;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to check the misuse of the provision; and

(d) the action taken against the fraudulent firms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (d). There is no provision in the Customs Act, 1962, permitting import of goods without a licence if the goods are to be re-exported with a value addition of 10% or more. However, as per Paragraph 128 A of the Exim Policy 1992-97 (RE: March, 1996), any item appearing in the Negative List of imports or Negative List of Exports (except prohibited items in either list) may be imported for re-export without a licence subject to the conditions that (a) there is a minimum value addition of 10%; (b) the goods are imported under Customs Bond; (c) import and re-export are made from the same Customs Bonded premises; and (d) the goods are not taken outside the Customs Bonded premises. Thus adequate safeguards have been provided to prevent any possible misuse.

Exports to Gulf

4562. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that China poses stiff challenges to Indian Goods in Gulf;

(b) whether the India's exports in textiles, garments, plastics and rubber sectors have come down in comparison to Chinese exports where India had been the key supplier in the past;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government have conducted any study in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLAI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f). India's total exports to the Gulf countries (6 GCC countries viz. Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia & UAE) during the past 3 years have been increasing. During 1994-95, exports increased by 2.3% over the previous year; the increase in 1995-96 was 19% over 1994-95 figures; export growth in 1996-97 has been over 36% during the first quarter when compared with last year.

India's export in textiles garments, plastic & rubber sectors, the position during last 3 years exports to Gulf is as under:-

(Rs. in crores)

Item	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Textiles	864.83	1041.59	1201.96
Garments	574.03	459.72	552.20
Plastics	258.72	292.06	268.89
Rubber	94.04	128.74	196.13

Export of garments declined in 1994-95 to the extent of 19.9% over 1993-94 figures, but picked up in 1995-96. In the plastic sector exports marginally declined by 7.90% in 1995-96 compared with 1994-95. In other cases export growth has ranged from 12% to 50% over the previous year. In sectors like textiles, garments, machinery, and electrical equipments, Chinese Exports to the gulf have reportedly grown at a faster pace. However, part of the goods sourced from China are, it is understood, re-exported from Hong Kong & Singapore. Chinese goods in turn are reportedly are exported from the Gulf to Iran, North Africa and East Africa. These factors and non availability of authentic data precludes a precise conclusion from an analysis of relative growth item by item.

However, steps are taken on continuous basis to increase our exports in competition to other countries. Some of these are as under:-

(i) Participation in International fairs and exhibitions;

(ii) ingraining competitiveness in manufacturer and product quality;

(iii) exchange of delegation both at official and business level to identify and expand opportunities and diversification of the export basket.

(iv) improve export facilitation.

Industries in Assam

4563. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA:
DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted in the North Eastern States particularly in Assam for setting up of small, medium and heavy industries for the generation of employment;

(b) if so, the number of industries set up and started functioning during each of the last three years in private and public sector in the said States; and

(c) the details of industries given subsidy such as industry subsidy, transport subsidy and such other subsidies to generate employment in industries in the N.E. States?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Working results of Associate Banks of S.B.I.

4564. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of associate banks of State Bank of India as on date;

(b) the working results of each of the associate banks during each of the last three years;

(o) whether the Government propose to amalgamate all these banks; and

(d) if so, the time by which decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) At present there are seven Associate Banks of State Bank of India.

(b) The profit/losses of these banks, bank-wise, during the last three years, is furnished below:-

(Rupees in crores)

Sl. No.	Name of the Bank	As on 31.3.94	As on 31.3.95	As on 31.3.96
1.	State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur	6.50	8.04	25.79
2.	State Bank of Hyderabad	24.48	43.60	50.00